

TRANSITION & RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

By
Shirley D. Caban

As the ISC Honolulu Transition Relocation Manager (TRM), my mission is to assist relocating and transitioning members and their families by providing them accurate, and comprehensive information. In addition, I provide employment assistance, which includes job referrals, resume assistance and information on duty stations for CONUS and OUTCONUS locations.

SPONSOR PROGRAM

Several hundred members and their families will report to a new duty station in the D14 AOR. Relocation to a new area can be a traumatic and disruptive experience, especially overseas. The backbone of the Transfer Program is the Sponsor. Therefore it is prudent to review our efforts and responsibilities in assisting both our unaccompanied and accompanied members and their families in this process.

The objectives of a Sponsorship Program are:

- Ensure newcomers arrive feeling like members of the new team.
- Ensure newcomers and their families have positive first impressions of the unit and district.

Relocating to a new duty station and getting established in a new community can be a challenging experience. Some members require little or no assistance while others have unique requirements that a standard information packet cannot meet. The individualized assistance and support a member and his or her family members receive from the new command can set the tone for the tour and significantly affect the member's satisfaction during the assignment. Positive command and sponsor enthusiasm are invaluable at this critical time.

Good sponsorship will often make the difference between a good and bad move. It can:

- Reduce the culture shock virtually everyone coming to a new area experiences.
- Increase your unit and work team productivity by getting the newcomer settled in fast.

- Improve your unit morale by solving little problems before they cause big administrative headaches.
- If the newcomer is married, you'll be helping a whole Coast Guard family. Moving can be especially stressful for a spouse and children.
- Increase Coast Guard Quality of Life and Mission Readiness.

YOU HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO BE A SPONSOR - HERE ARE TIPS ON BEING A GOOD SPONSOR:

As a sponsor you provide the personal touch. Here are some key points about being responsive and making the newcomer feel like an important part of the team:

- Think of the kind of help you would want if you were making a move. Remember that each situation is different, and not everyone wants or needs the same assistance.
- Personalize your approach, to your style and their needs.
- Listen. Many times a newcomer can reduce stress associated with a move by merely talking to someone "already there" who cares.
- Be responsive and follow through.
- Be open and stay positive. Let the newcomer form his or her own impressions about the unit, and local area.
- If you miss a call, always call back the same day if possible. This is considered an official call that can be placed through your unit phone. Inform the newcomer whom to call if you are going on TAD or will be otherwise unavailable for a period of time.
- Be a sponsor for the entire inbound family. Ask questions about the family and their background.
- If you don't know how to respond to a particular issue, seek assistance from your supervisor,

administrative yeoman, executive officer, ISC support staff, or the Work-Life Center.

- Stay connected with the newcomer for at least six months. Check on them periodically to ensure they are settling in okay. The term "settling in" refers to the newcomer's basic knowledge about the area, such as schools, shopping, restaurants, recreational opportunities, spouse employment opportunities, child care, etc.

The ISC Honolulu Work-Life Transition and Relocation Programs Manager (TRM) mails a comprehensive Welcome Aboard Package to all members within one week of receiving notice of the member's orders. Packages are designed specifically for each of the Hawaiian Islands, Guam, Japan, etc. For further information on the packages, contact Shirley at 541-1586 or SCaban@D14.uscg.mil

The TRM offers "Excellent Sponsor Training," a one-hour course. A description is available in the Training Catalog section of our website. Several classes have already been completed. Additional classes are scheduled for the Work-Life Center, at 1000, on March 11 & 19.